

PAHAYAGAN NG PARTIDO KOMUNISTA NG PILIPINAS  
PINAPATNUBAYAN NG  
MARXISMO-LENINISMO-MAOISMO

# Bayan

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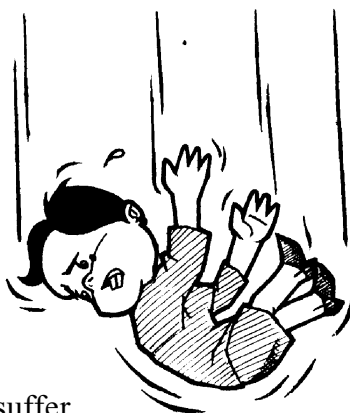
## EDITORIAL

# The people could no longer stand the Macapagal-Arroyo regime

**G**loria Macapagal-Arroyo has been quickly isolated from the people. In a span of a few months, disgust for the ruling regime has become widespread due to Macapagal-Arroyo's failure to decisively address the fundamental problems of the people. The regime is becoming even more isolated from the Filipino people for its outrightly fascist, puppet and thoroughly antipeople moves.

The ruling reactionary political system continues to suffer worsening instability. There have been several indications that Macapagal-Arroyo will not be able to stay beyond 2004. It is in fact likely that she will not be able to finish her term and will be forced to step down even before 2004. This will result from the confluence and intensification of several issues, including US armed intervention, the economic crisis, corruption and conflicts among reactionaries and fascist violence against the people. All these issues fuel people's action and resistance.

Macapagal-Arroyo and her technocratic economic "experts" cannot deny the existence of the intensifying economic crisis and the people's worsening poverty. IMF-WB and WTO dictates continue to be enforced without letup. To deodorize her image, Macapagal-Arroyo has resorted to statistical sleight of hand and has issued lofty declarations and promises to the people.





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**Bayan**

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**9 NEWS****A CALL TO OUR READERS**

The Editorial Staff of **Ang Bayan** calls on readers to contribute to our publication by submitting comments and suggestions, news items or revolutionary experiences that are worth printing in our paper.

**AB** comes out in Pilipino, Bisaya, Hiligaynon, Iloko and English. Please send a blank email to the address corresponding to the edition/s you would like to receive:

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Local export-oriented production continues to plunge along with plummeting industrial production worldwide. Unemployment especially in export industries is worsening. The reactionary regime's "emergency employment" program is useless, with its creation of nothing but temporary, contractual and unproductive work.

Despite the intense economic crisis, the regime stubbornly refuses to grant immediate social benefits demanded by the people. It has junked the long-standing demand for a P125 wage increase and merely granted in November an insulting P30 emergency cost of living allowance. It has not taken any steps to implement genuine land reform. Instead, it enforces policies that favor big foreign agricultural corporations. Even its much-vaunted housing program is no different from that of previous governments in its resort to demolitions of urban poor communities to give way to the interests of big foreign real estate companies.

Macapagal-Arroyo has shown that she is one of the most rabid puppets of US imperialism in the history of the neocolonial republic. For the first time since the Second World War, American troops have been deployed to a combat zone within Philippine territory, which is violative of even the reactionary government's constitution.

The regime has subsumed both its domestic and foreign policies to the US-led "war on terrorism". Macapagal-Arroyo secretly negotiated with the US and she and US president George W. Bush hurriedly cooked up the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) that further buttresses previous agreements that trample upon the Philippines' national sovereignty.

In its first year alone, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime has surpassed the Estrada government's record in violating human rights. Macapagal-Arroyo has unleashed with full ferocity the reactionary military and police forces to suppress the people's resistance and struggles.

Military campaigns are being relentlessly waged in the countryside. In many areas, deceptive "civilian-military operations" have been set aside. Barefaced fascism reigns and large-scale terror is being sown among the people. Growing numbers of people are forced to flee their farms due to massive military operations.

The regime, led by its military officials, has been relentlessly sabotaging and obstructing the peace talks. The Macapagal-Arroyo regime has suspended the conduct of formal talks and has substituted back channel negotiations to limit the extent of what the revolutionary movement may gain from the peace process. *(See related article on the peace talks.)*

The people are particularly incensed with persistent worsening corruption, especially with cases involving coercive business deals, anomalous negotiations and secret arrangements with big cronies like Danding Cojuangco and Lucio Tan and compromises with the Estrada camp.

Macapagal-Arroyo uses bureaucratic power the same way Estrada and other presidents did in the past, to grant favors to her own relatives, friends and business partners. Macapagal-Arroyo herself and her husband Mike Arroyo have been involved in such anomalies.

Within the short span of a year, it is becoming ever clearer to the masses that the Macapagal-Arroyo regime bears no fundamental difference from the deposed and despicable Estrada regime. Macapagal-Arroyo's popularity has dropped at an even faster rate than that of previous presidents in their first year in office. Even the various surveys bear this out.

During the commemoration of the first anniversary of EDSA 2, only the government observed the occasion with rejoicing. The forces behind the huge demonstrations of January 2001, in particular, the organizations allied

with Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and the Bayan Muna party, poured out into the streets to condemn what they termed as Macapagal-Arroyo's betrayal of EDSA 2. Soldiers and policemen blocked thousands of demonstrators from holding a rally along Ortigas in an attempt to stifle the cries of a people agonizing from the suffering and brutality inflicted by the Macapagal-Arroyo regime.

Her out-and-out fascism, complete opening up of the economy, brazen bureaucratic corruption and especially her shameless

voke us into joining coups d'état or putsches with the objective of preempting the people from exercising their initiative and unleashing their strength.

It is likewise important to pay attention to winning over personalities within the ruling regime itself to unite with and join anti-imperialist and propeople struggles.

More than anything, the revolutionary forces, including the New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, must

***The Party and the revolutionary forces are aware of their and the people's capability to overthrow any reactionary ruling clique through peaceful means. But above all else, the Party is aware that in order to attain fundamental changes for the interests of the toiling masses, it is necessary to overthrow not only whatever reactionary ruling clique there is, but ultimately, the entire system they represent.***

puppetry, are pushing the people to oust the ruling regime even before 2004.

In this situation, it is important to clarify that the more important factor in any endeavor to peacefully overthrow the ruling regime is the establishment of the broadest possible front of democratic forces, as broad as, if not broader than, that which overthrew Estrada in January 2001.

Such a broad front must emphasize anti-imperialist issues and the problems and grievances of the broad masses of the people, especially the toiling masses; and encourage massive street actions by hundreds of thousands up to millions of people. We must be vigilant of those who would pro-

strengthen the armed struggle in the countryside.

The Party and the revolutionary forces are aware of their and the people's capability to overthrow any reactionary ruling clique through peaceful means. But above all else, the Party is aware that in order to attain fundamental changes for the interests of the toiling masses, it is necessary to overthrow not only whatever reactionary ruling clique there is, but ultimately, the entire system they represent. This can only be accomplished through armed struggle, which will smash the machinery and bureaucratic-military structure of the entire reactionary system. **AB**

# Conflicts within the ruling classes further intensify

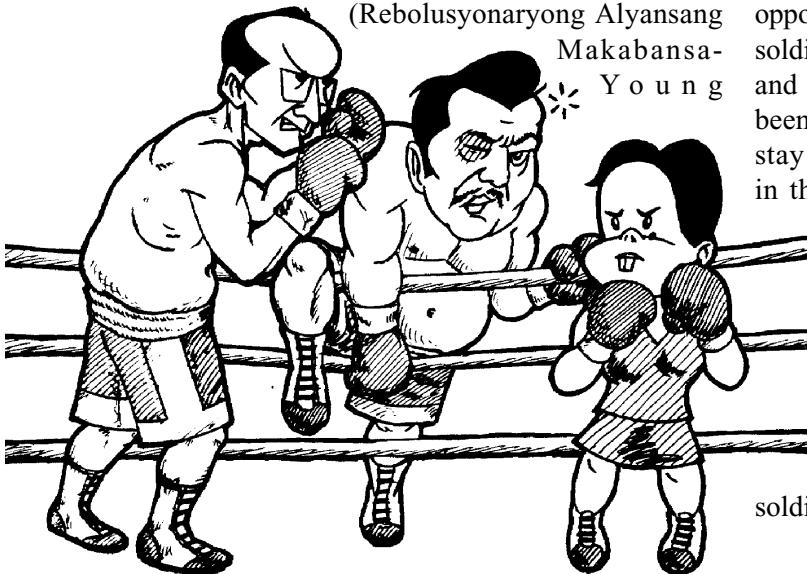
**Conflicts between the ruling Macapagal-Arroyo clique and the pro-Estrada clique continue to intensify. Simultaneously, cracks within the Macapagal-Arroyo clique itself are becoming apparent due to intense jockeying for the 2004 elections.**

There are precious few resources that could be peacefully divided. Thus, the ruling faction is sucking dry and wishes to monopolize the milking cows of the former ruling Estrada clique. Two striking examples are the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) that were both raided by the Estradas on a regular basis. The president's husband Mike Arroyo has illegally utilized PCSO funds to defray the costs of the May 2001 elections. The regime has also been conniving with cronies of former presidents, from Marcos to Estrada. Among them are Danding Cojuangco and Lucio Tan.

The conflicts have reached their utmost intensity. Reactionary anti-Macapagal-Arroyo groups have in their immediate agenda the overthrow of the regime. Some have threatened to replace the regime with a provisional civilian-militarist junta.

Among those that have ranged themselves against the Macapagal-Arroyo clique are a number of forces that actively supported EDSA 2, such as the Philippine Consultative Assembly (PCA) composed of retired pro-Ramos military officials and personalities, a faction of RAM-YOU

(Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa-Young)



Officers Union) and the Council of Philippine Affairs (COPA) composed of forces close to Jose "Peping" Cojuangco. Grouplets led by opportunist traitors to the revolutionary movement have also hitched a ride with these organizations.

These forces have been aligning themselves against the Macapagal-Arroyo regime since October and have started rumors about coup threats and "EDSA 4". The seriousness of such threats and schemes can be reflected in the killing on December 31, 2001 of Lt. Baron Cervantes, a former YOU member, a consultant of Roilo Golez and a known supporter of Macapagal-Arroyo. Cervantes was silenced for having spilled the beans on the coup plots against the regime.

Meanwhile, threats from the pro-Estrada groups have not waned. Neither have Gen. Panfilo Lacson's armed supporters been completely suppressed. Reports point to Lacson's involvement in arming and training the so-called Urban Poor Army that includes the pro-Estrada People's Movement Against Poverty. Even the Estrada camp has threatened to wage another EDSA-type uprising.

Some anti-Macapagal-Arroyo reactionaries have also chosen to cast their lot with the growing opposition to direct armed intervention by American soldiers. Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Rodolfo Biazon and others from the reactionary opposition have been assailing the entry and projected long-term stay of growing numbers of American soldiers in the country as a violation of the reactionary constitution and laws. Imee Marcos has also exposed and assailed the secret MLSA accord between Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and US president George W. Bush.

Even within the ruling coalition, personalities such as former Sen. Jovito Salonga and Sen. Joker Arroyo, have severely criticized the intervention of American soldiers in the country. **AB**

# Macapagal-Arroyo regime relentlessly obstructing the peace talks

The regime is obstructing the peace talks at every turn. As it progressed, the militarists in Macapagal-Arroyo's cabinet persistently and vehemently objected to its continuance. At the instance of Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and National Security Adviser Roilo Golez, the peace talks were twice halted supposedly due to the NPA's punishment of notorious and murderous politicians. The talks have been suspended now for more than half a year.

The regime likewise continues to refuse to release political prisoners and grant other concrete concessions to the revolutionary movement and the people. Even the joint Christmas season ceasefire was violated several times by the reactionary armed forces. Intense military operations go on without letup in the guerrilla fronts of the revolutionary movement. It is clear that Macapagal-Arroyo favors and has given her blessings to the game plan and direction that the militarists have set.

Their militarist position has further rigidified with the all-out support given by the puppet regime to the US' "counter-terrorism" campaign and the NPA's inclusion in the list of those the US considers as terrorists.

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime once again suspended the scheduled formal resumption of the peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) on January 7 in Oslo, Norway. Instead, the regime insists on holding nothing more than back channel talks.

Macapagal-Arroyo hopes that through the conduct of back channel talks for an indefinite duration, the negotiations would go on aimlessly without the revolutionary movement and the people attaining anything substantive even as the NDFP's position is slowly undermined and its strength exhausted. Macapagal-Arroyo would like these talks to be held in The Netherlands to deny the NDFP the chance of being accorded diplomatic recognition by the Norwegian government and the international community.

The regime would likewise want the talks held away from the public's view so that the Filipino people would remain unaware of the superiority of

the NDFP's program and the justness of its proposed reforms. On the other hand, the regime wants to avoid exposing to the people the reactionary and decadent character of the social system that it maintains and defends.

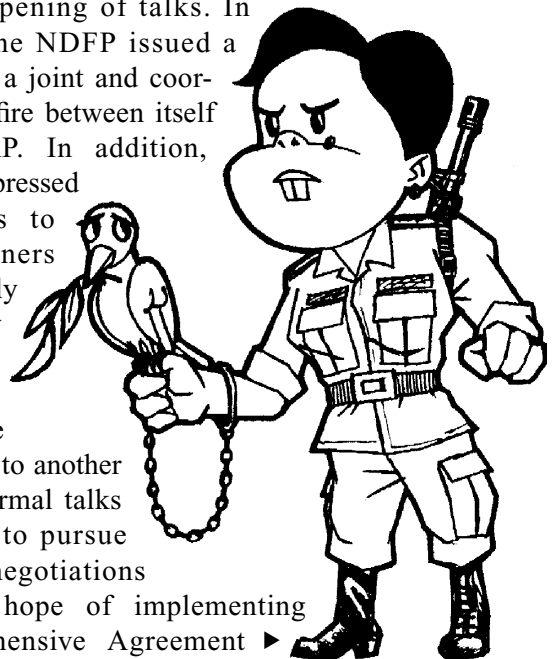
The NDFP is aware of the regime's objectives in confining the negotiations to back channel talks. The NDFP negotiating panel has made it clear that keeping the talks at an informal level for an indefinite duration and without achieving anything decisive, is untenable.

To jump-start the talks and to prevent the peace negotiations process with the Macapagal-Arroyo regime from collapsing, the NDFP has chosen to be flexible despite the GRP's lack of reciprocity. In November, the NDFP agreed to hold the meetings of the reciprocal working committees on socio-economic reforms in the Philippines even without the formal opening of talks. In

December, the NDFP issued a challenge for a joint and coordinated ceasefire between itself and the GRP. In addition, the NDFP expressed

its readiness to release prisoners of war currently in the custody of NPA units in Far South Mindanao. The

NDFP agreed to another round of informal talks in its desire to pursue the peace negotiations and in the hope of implementing the Comprehensive Agreement ►



THE ARMED INTERVENTION BY US IMPERIALISM IS A BRAZEN AFFRONT TO PHILIPPINE NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. IT LIKEWISE NEGATES THE LONG HISTORY OF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE AGAINST FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND OCCUPATION. IT INCITES WIDESPREAD LOATHING FOR, AND PEOPLE'S ACTION AGAINST, US IMPERIALISM AND THE PUPPET AND FASCIST MACAPAGAL-ARROYO REGIME. THE OUSTING AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME OF ALL FOREIGN TROOPS CURRENTLY IN THE COUNTRY PRESENTS A BIG CHALLENGE TO THE PEOPLE.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO CLOSELY OBSERVE, RESIST AND FRUSTRATE THE ARMED INTERVENTION OF US IMPERIALISM IN THE COUNTRY, AB IS PUBLISHING ARTICLES ON THE MAJOR ISSUES AND EVENTS INVOLVING THE STATIONING OF FOREIGN TROOPS IN THE COUNTRY AND THREATS OF MORE MASSIVE AND MORE VIRULENT MILITARY AGGRESSION.

## American troops Basing themselves anew in the Philippines

US IMPERIALIST ARMED INTERVENTION AND aggression in the country have become blatant and are intensifying. In the guise of conducting "military exercises", 160 Special Forces troops and an additional 500 soldiers or a full battalion of American troops are being slipped into the country. Next to Afghanistan, this is currently the biggest single deployment of American troops outside the US.

US imperialism has arrogated unto itself the right to intervene in and trample on the sovereignty of other countries in the name of crushing those it considers "terrorists".

The battalion of US troops will be based in Zamboanga City for six months. But military officials have admitted that the troops may stay on for up to a year should they fail to crush the "terrorists". Last year, 26 US Special Forces troops had already arrived in Basilan. By January, up to 65 soldiers were in Zamboanga City. There are 14 soldiers in Cebu while another 400 are temporarily based in Clark Airfield, Pampanga. More than 1,200 Filipino soldiers are set to participate in the "training exercises".



With the affront to the principle of national sovereignty

## THE PEACE TALKS ARE IN PERIL

AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF IMPEDING THE ADVANCE OF THE PEACE TALKS, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime has now put the peace process in peril due to its having allowed the entry of hundreds of American troops within Philippine territory.

This, aside from the Macapagal-Arroyo regime's apparent lack of interest in the peace talks, are now being deliberated on by the National Council of the National Democratic Front. The NDF is set to decide whether it should continue talks with the Macapagal-Arroyo government.

The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992, the document that lays down the fundamental conventions in the conduct of the peace talks, cites national sovereignty as among the principles that both parties should advance. The entry of American troops in the country's territory is a brazen affront by the regime on the principle of national sovereignty.

The regime's move is worse than the ratification of the Visiting Forces Agreement in 1998, which was behind the NDF's decision to stop holding peace talks with the Estrada regime. **AB**

◀ on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law or CARHRIHL and establishing the Joint Monitoring Committee for the accord.

The regime has conditioned the resumption of formal talks on the merging of negotiations for the remaining three points on the agenda allegedly to arrive at a single agreement. This is violative of the The Hague Joint Declaration which stipulates the order in which the items in the four-point substantive agenda should be negotiated (on human rights and international humanitarian law, socio-economic reforms, constitutional and political reforms and, lastly, disposition of forces and cessation of hostilities). This will mean a more protracted process of formal negotiations before a decisive agreement and substantive benefits could be attained from the talks. **AB**

◀ Because even the reactionary constitution strictly prohibits foreign troops from establishing bases in the country, the Macapagal-Arroyo government has been resorting to an assortment of rationalizations to legitimize the presence of American soldiers.

The American troops will supposedly serve as “advisers” and “trainors” in operations conducted by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) against the Abu Sayyaf and in the fight against terrorism. They are supposedly here to participate in joint exercises with AFP forces under Kalayaan-Aguila 2002 and Balance Piston 02-1. Although they are not supposed to engage directly in combat, 160 Special Forces troops will enter combat zones in Basilan. They have been granted the right to shoot back “when they are shot at”. Their supposed objective is to recover two Americans held by the Abu Sayyaf for eight months now, although it has also been said that the troops would stay on even after the two captives are recovered. The “training” would supposedly include psywar operations such as civic action and the implementation of socio-economic projects.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has brazenly ridden roughshod over the processes and limitations set even by reactionary laws. The regime is hard put trying to provide the legal basis for the entry of American troops. Even the provisions of the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) have been distorted by the regime in its effort to legalize the entry of American troops. The latest rationale has been provided by the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA), which was secretly cooked up by Macapagal-Arroyo and George W. Bush in November. (*See article on the MLSA*) In the end, Macapagal-Arroyo still insists that it can be legal for American combat troops to enter the country—a view that has angered even those within her party, such as Sen. Joker Arroyo. **AB**

## Mutual Logistics Support Agreement

### New name for an old agreement

THE MUTUAL LOGISTICS SUPPORT Agreement (MLSA) is the latest name for the Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA), an accord that the US has been pushing since 1992 but has not been signed due to fierce opposition from the people and even from a number of reactionary politicians.

When Macapagal-Arroyo visited the US in November, she and George W. Bush hurriedly cooked up the MLSA. At first, it was kept from the public, with Malacañang persistently denying the existence of such an agreement.

With the cat out of the bag, Macapagal-Arroyo has been underhandedly presenting it as a simple “arrangement” between the defense departments of the US and the Philippines. They refuse to call it an “agreement” to avoid going through the complex process of having treaties with other countries ratified by the Senate. The MLSA was signed by AFP chief Gen. Diomedio Villanueva and US Pacific Command chief Adm. Dennis Blair. Villanueva, though, has said that what they signed was a mere “draft”.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s treacherous approval of the MLSA has brazenly negated the victory attained after ►



## OPPOSITION TO ENTRY OF ARMED U.S. TROOPS SPREADS

THE PEOPLE’S UNITED OPPOSITION TO THE ENTRY OF AMERICAN troops in the Philippines is fast spreading.

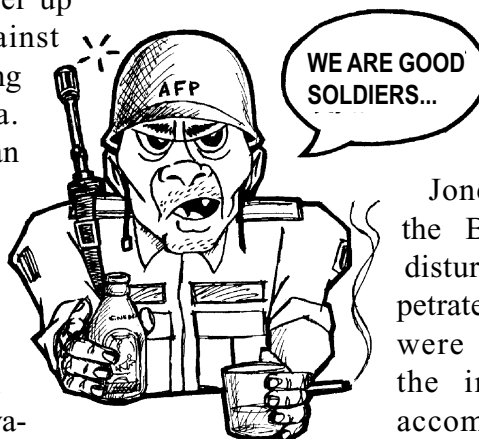
Since the second week of January, patriotic organizations under Bagong Alyansang Makabayan have led almost daily protest actions in front of the US embassy, Malacañang and various other parts of the country. Simultaneously, workers’, peasants’, student, youth and women’s organizations and that of other democratic sectors have gone full steam in clarifying patriotic issues and standpoints against the entry of American soldiers in the country. ►

## The 5<sup>th</sup> ID could not cover up its abuses in Isabel

In statements issued on December 10, 2001, CPP- NPA- NDF Northeastern Luzon spokesperson Ka Salvador del Pueblo and NPA Benito Tesorio Command (BTC) spokesperson Ka Delio Baladon have belied the falsehoods uttered by Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Alvarado of the 5<sup>th</sup> ID.

Alvarado has been trying to cover up human rights abuses committed against the people by 5<sup>th</sup> ID troops during division operations in Hacienda Sta. Isabel in Ilagan; Vintar, Dolores and San Mariano in Quirino; Germitan, Dibulod, Namnama and nearby villages in Jones; and in Madadamman, Diasan, Villa Campo, Narra and adjacent villages in Echague town.

Some of the soldiers' abuses on record that are being covered up by Alva-



rado involve the prohibition of peasants from going to their farms, forcing peasants to serve as guides, mauling of youth and elderly folk, setting up of camps in schools and the houses of the masses and the conduct of nightly drinking and gambling sprees. There have also been a number of sexual harassment cases committed against women.

Alvarado spun tales during his radio interviews. He persistently denied violations of human rights in Ilagan and Quirino and abuses by 5<sup>th</sup> ID troopers led by Captain Marana, Lieutenant Betinol and Lieutenant Gay against residents of Villa Bello, Jones. Alvarado claimed that the BTC's exposés on public disturbances and violations perpetrated by the 502<sup>nd</sup> Brigade were baseless. This, despite the incontrovertible evidence accompanying cases filed by ▶

### *continuation of MLSA...*

decades of struggle by the Filipino people to oust the US military bases. Through the MLSA, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime has secretly restored to the US the right to keep bases and station troops in the country, in exchange for a small amount of aid and some outmoded military equipment from the US.

Under the MLSA, the US will be accorded "base support" and its soldiers allowed to use Clark, Subic and any other part of the Philippines for its military objectives.

Worse, it grants US imperialism the license to further trample on Philippine sovereignty and intervene in the country's internal affairs by deploying military troops that would pursue forces that it considers threats to the US' interests and security. **AB**

*(See related article on ACSA, "US adamant in using the country as a military base", AB July 2001)*

### *continuation of Opposiiton...*

Macapagal-Arroyo insists that the people are in favor of the entry of American troops. Like the Marcos fascist dictatorship, the regime is desperately using anti-communist hysteria and brands as "communist" everyone who objects to US intervention.

Nonetheless, Macapagal-Arroyo could not stop the emergence and renewed prevalence of patriotic sentiments among the people. Fora, consultations and gatherings to form a broad patriotic united front are taking place nationwide.

Even now, various patriotic forces and personalities like former senator Wigberto Tañada and Nini Quezon-Avanceña are actively conferring and cooperating. Across the country, people's actions are being coordinated in time for the start of Balikatan 02-01 which is set to begin on January 31 despite controversies and protests. **AB**



## 2 SOLDIERS KILLED IN ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR FIREFIGHT

Two soldiers were killed and a CAFGU element was wounded when 51<sup>st</sup> IB troops engaged the New People's Army (NPA) in a firefight in Barangay Mahalingob, Lapuyan, Zamboanga del Sur on January 3. The soldiers were conducting a military operation despite the declaration of a Christmas season ceasefire when they encountered the NPA.



Reports From  
**CORRESPONDENTS**

## 5<sup>TH</sup> ID INVOLVED IN ILLEGAL LOGGING

BRIG. GEN. RODOLFO ALVARADO IS COVERING UP the involvement of the 5<sup>th</sup> ID in illegal logging in Diden along the border of San Mariano and San Guillermo in Isabela. Instead, he mendaciously brags that the 5<sup>th</sup> ID is there to stop the NPA's logging activities.

In a statement issued on December 8, 2001, Comrade Salvador del Pueblo said that the 5<sup>th</sup> ID is an instrument of big capitalist loggers such as the Dy family of Isabela. Its troops serve as sawmill guards. They also watch over exit points for logs in Maconacon, Dinapigue; Masipi, Cabagan; and San Mariano, all in Isabela; and in Rizal, Lasam, Piat, Sto. Niño and Baggao in Cagayan province. They guard trucks that transport logs and lumber.

Alvarado and his men involved in the payola racket from illegal logging rake in a lot of money. They earn hundreds of thousands of pesos from "confiscated" logs. It is no secret to the masses that the volume of seized logs reported by the 5<sup>th</sup> ID in the military's weekly radio program is much smaller than that actually "confiscated".

Said Comrade del Pueblo, "the New People's Army strictly and totally bans logging by big capitalists and imperialists in areas where the Party, people's army and people's democratic government have achieved a sufficient level of political and military strength."

He said that only local residents are allowed to log, but only for the purpose of constructing houses or to raise cash during emergencies. Permission for such logging activities must also be secured from the Party committees that have jurisdiction over the area.

According to del Pueblo, "for the revolutionary movement, the forests and nature in general must primarily serve the interests of the people. We defend and nurture them for the welfare, needs, protection and future of present and succeeding generations of the masses of the people." **AB**

◀ farmers from Barangay Villa Bello and members of a fact-finding mission conducted in the area in November.

Comrade Baladon added that combat operations by some 200 troops of the AFP 502<sup>nd</sup> Brigade continued even during the Macapagal-Arroyo regime's declared ceasefire from December 10, 2001 to January 6, 2002. The operations were conducted in the villages of Echague and Jones.

Alvarado's lies are all meant to deceive the people. Like military operations conducted in other provinces in the country, the enemy's brutality is being covered up through civil-military operations such as road-building; the setting up of pergolas and toilets; and the conduct of circumcisions and mass weddings. The enemy uses such means to portray themselves as well-meaning, even as they abuse the people.

Comrade Baladon stated that "it is no coincidence that while some military troops construct toilets in Barangay Diasan, other troops are dragging and tying up farmers in Barangay Villa Bello!" **AB**



### EX-PC TROOPER PUNISHED BY NPA IN SORSOGON

The NPA meted the death penalty on a former element of the Philippine Constabulary in the town of Irosin, Sorsogon on the morning of January 27.

The NPA punished Igmedio Panti Sr., 60, because of his long record of brutality against residents of Barangay Gulang-gulang, Irosin, which goes back to the time he was with the PC.

### ABRA MAYOR'S KILLING NOT THE NPA'S DOING

The Chadli Molintas Command (CMC) of the NPA in the Cordillera denied responsibility for the death of Tubo, Abra mayor Jose Segundo on December 27, 2001. The CMC said that it strictly adhered to the NDF's policy on the temporary cessation of hostilities. Nonetheless, the CMC said that Segundo had many transgressions against the people of Tubo and had made many enemies. Segundo was guilty of, among others, raping several women. The NPA said that the abusive mayor was due for punishment.

### LAND OCCUPATION IN STANFILCO LAUNCHED

Farm workers employed by the Stanfilco Company occupied seven hectares of banana lands on January 14 in Panabo City, Davao del Norte. Stanfilco, which owns a 1,004-hectare banana plantation is a multinational company and subsidiary of Dole Philippines. The land occupied by the farmers is part of a 134-hectare lot that was set aside to be planted with rice under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) in 1991. Stanfilco recently reclaimed the land illegally to have it planted to



bananas once more. The farmers threatened to occupy more land if Stanfilco refuses to grant them their right to have a piece of land where they could plant rice.

### CASSAVA PLANTS UPROOTED FROM SMC NURSERY IN ISABELA

Farmers uprooted cassava plants in a one-hectare nursery owned by San Miguel Corporation (SMC) in Barangay Santiago, Quirino, Isabela in the last week of January. The farmers oppose SMC owner Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco's scheme to convert 150,000 hectares in 12 towns in Isabela into a cassava plantation. Up to 500 hectares are set to be used as a nursery for cassava plants.

### 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF MENDIOLA MASSACRE COMMEMORATED

Thousands of farmers and other sectors commemorated the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mendiola Massacre on January 22 to demand justice for all farmer victims of human rights violations. The farmers led by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas and Kilusang Enero 22 rallied along Mendiola and in front of the US embassy. They strongly condemned the escalation of fascism especially under the rabidly puppet Macapagal-Arroyo regime.

Meanwhile, more than 300 members of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Bayan Muna and other militant groups rallied in Nueva Ecija to demand justice for the 17 farmer victims of the Lupao Massacre in 1987 and seven other farmer victims of AFP executions these past months in Pantabangan and General Natividad.

### RALLY OF DOMESTICS IN HONG KONG LED BY FILIPINOS

Led by the United Filipinos in Hong Kong, an organization of Filipino domestics, the biggest rally attended by Filipinos in Hong Kong was launched on January 13 against the reduction of salaries received by maids in the city.

Thousands of domestics from the Philip-

pires, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand marched in the streets of Hong Kong to demand the maintenance of the wage freeze approved in 1999 after Hong Kong went through a severe recession. The minimum wage for domestics of HK\$3,670 is set to be reduced to HK\$3,120 to as low as HK\$2,876 by February 1. More than 152,000 Filipinos and 66,000 Indonesians are affected by the wage reduction.



### **MORE THAN 3,000 WORKERS IN 186 FIRMS TO BE LAID OFF**

As early as the first month of the year, firms announced the planned layoff of 3,075 workers from 186 companies. Up to 2,232 workers will be laid off from 161 companies while 843 are set to be dismissed due to the closure of 25 businesses as a result of the intense economic crisis. The biggest number of workers set to lose their jobs comes from the National Capital Region (2,268). Among the firms that plan to lay off workers are Coca-Cola Bottlers Phil. (325), Royal Match (229) and ABS-CBN (150).

In related news, 800 workers from Nestlé Philippines in Cabuyao, Laguna struck on January 14 to oppose the company's plan to lay off 30% of the work force and to demand their right to receive cash pensions and other benefits.

### **P10 BILLION PEACE BONDS ANOMALY UNEARTHED**

A senate hearing on January 29 has unearthed details of an anomaly involving P10 billion in treasury bonds called Poverty Eradication and Alleviation Certificates or PEACe bonds. CODE-NGO raked in P1.4 billion from RCBC's sale of PEACe bonds. RCBC earned P300 million, and Capex Incorporated and other CODE-NGO financial advisers, P100 million. Implicated in the scam are National Treasurer Sergio Edeza, Finance

Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and his sister, CODE-NGO chair Marissa Camacho-Reyes.

CODE-NGO is one of the leading non-governmental organizations used by the social democrats to deceive the people and siphon funds from international agencies that support socio-economic projects proposed by NGOs in various countries.

### **PEOPLE'S MONEY SQUANDERED BY LEGISLATORS**

Up to P1.34 billion of the people's money was spent by 22 senators and 222 congressmen in the year 2000. The Senate spent P249 million while Congress spent P1.099 billion. The biggest spenders in Congress were Mamintal Adiong of Lanao del Sur (P6.8 million) and Abdullah Mangotara of Lanao del Sur (P6.3 million). The congressmen spent an average of P5 million each. In the Senate, the biggest spenders were pro-Estrada senators Vicente Sotto (P12.92 million), Robert Jaworski (P12.30 million), Anna Dominique Coseteng (P12.28 million), Juan Ponce Enrile (P12.20 million), Francisco Tatad (P12.05 million) and Blas Ople (P12.04 million). The

legislators also spent P1.8 million on salaries for employees and "consultants" who were often their own relatives.



### **STATE ASSETS SOLD AT A LOSS TO FOREIGN BANK**

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime and Lehman Brothers Asia signed on January 12 the "Philippine Recovery Fund", an agreement that will fund government projects in exchange for non-performing loans (NPL) and state assets, among them public land.

Under the agreement, the Macapagal-Arroyo regime sold at a loss P611 billion worth of public assets in exchange for a measly P50 billion (\$1 billion). The P611 billion worth of assets comprises P461 billion NPL in the form of mortgages and bankrupt government businesses in housing projects and P150 billion in foreclosed properties.

## NEWS

The Letter of Intent for the \$1 billion agreement will be signed by the bank and Macapagal-Arroyo on February 3 when she visits the US.

### **BANKRUPTCIES AMONG U.S. COMPANIES SPREADING**

More and more US companies are filing for bankruptcy amid the recession that is battering the US. In 2001, up to 251 businesses in the US went bankrupt. This is the highest number of companies in the red recorded in the US. In 2000, only up to 176 companies went bankrupt. Most of those who filed for bankruptcy were in the telecommunications and computer sector. One of the companies that has gone bankrupt is Enron, the biggest energy firm in the US, with \$63 billion in assets.

The overall assets of bankrupt companies run up to \$254 billion, three times higher than the previous year. This indicates that more workers will be losing their jobs and related industries will be pulled down and sustain further losses. According to economists, no recovery is in sight

for the US economy in the first two quarters of 2002.

### **MORE COMPANIES DEFAULT ON DEBT PAYMENTS IN 2001**

More companies failed to pay their debts last year. Up to 211 companies with an overall debt of \$115.4 billion have declared their inability to pay, said Standard and Poor's, a US agency that makes economic analyses in various countries.

The US leads the list of those who failed to pay, with 162 defaults. Next are Argentina with 15; Canada, nine; Britain, five; Australia, four; Poland, three; and Mexico, two. Bermuda, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, South Korea, The Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Russia, Thailand and Venezuela all have one default each.

Most of those who failed to pay their debts were in the telecommunications industry. In Argentina, there were 10 banks among those that failed to settle their debts due to the economic crisis.

## **A N N O U N C E M E N T**

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